



NATIONAL LINK COALITION

Working together to stop violence against people and animals

The LINK-Letter Vol. 9, No. 1 January 2016

A monthly report of news from THE NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER



ON THE LINK BETWEEN ANIMAL ABUSE AND HUMAN VIOLENCE



www.NationalLinkCoalition.org

[Phil Arkow](#), Coordinator and Editor

SUBSCRIBE – It's Free!!



January is National Stalking Awareness Month

ANIMAL ABUSE AND... DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Eight Shelters Receive Pet-Friendly Construction Grants

Eight more domestic violence shelters have received grants from RedRover to enable them to create pet-friendly lodging for the pets of family violence survivors. The eight shelters shared a total of \$44,420 in grant funds through RedRover's [Safe Housing](#) program. Grant recipients are:

- A Better Way Services – Muncie, Ind.
- Catalyst Domestic Violence Services – Chico, Calif.
- Circle of Love Center – Greensboro, Ga.
- Domestic Violence Intervention Program – Iowa City, Iowa
- Dove House Advocacy Services – Port Townsend, Wash.
- Haven Women's Center of Stanislaus – Modesto, Calif.
- New Directions Domestic Abuse Shelter – Mount Vernon, Ohio
- YWCA Clark County SafeChoice Domestic Violence Shelter – Vancouver, Wash.

"When victims of domestic violence believe that there is nowhere safe to escape to with their pets, they may stay in the abusive relationship out of fear for their pets' safety," said Nicole Forsyth, RedRover President and CEO. "Their pets are often also victims of abuse, suffering from injuries and neglect. RedRover's Safe Housing grants make it possible for victims to receive lifesaving sheltering services, reassured that their pets are protected."



States targeted by RedRover in hopes of having at least one pet-friendly domestic violence shelter in every state by 2016.

One goal of the Safe Housing program is to have at least one pet-friendly domestic violence shelter in every state by the end of 2016. While applications will be accepted from any shelter in the 2016 application cycle, organizations in the following states are particularly encouraged to apply for grants of up to \$6,000 for building materials and supplies: Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Rhode Island, and West Virginia. Application deadlines for 2016 are May 15 and October 15.

ANIMAL ABUSE AND... CHILD MALTREATMENT

The Relevance of Animal Abuse to Child Development

There is increasing interest in how Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) – a concept promulgated by the seminal 1998 U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) study describing situations that result not only in short-term emotional and physical trauma to children but also to long-term health problems and increased risk of mortality. (See [LINK-Letter Nov.-Dec., 2014](#)). The study took a longitudinal look at more than 17,000 participants over a 14-year period and examined the adverse effects of such factors as emotional, physical and sexual abuse; physical and emotional neglect; violent treatment of the mother; substance abuse or mental illness in the household; a household member being incarcerated; and parental separation or divorce.



The ACEs pyramid of early traumas leading to long-term health and mortality risks

In 2014, the National Survey of Children’s Exposure to Violence (NatSCEV) expanded the ACEs study using psychological distress as an outcome measure and explored whether the ACEs adversities could be improved upon by considering a more comprehensive range of possible adverse experiences. The NatSCEV team asked for input at the time as to what additional factors might be included, and the National Link Coalition submitted a request that childhood exposure to, and perpetration of, animal cruelty be added as a relevant factor. (See [Link-Letter February, 2012](#)).

Meanwhile, animal cruelty was added to the *Diagnostic & Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* as a criterion for Conduct Disorder. Given these developments, the National Link Coalition regularly receives requests from researchers and field workers in the child abuse prevention and intervention arenas asking for statistical data about the impact on children from toxic exposure to animal cruelty, abuse and neglect and community violence such as dog- and cock-fighting. While a more comprehensive collection of facts are available through our online [Bibliography](#), we thought we would share with you some of the more significant findings in recent years about the animal abuse/child maltreatment Link: oversight given that and increasing studies reporting such findings as:

- As many as 31% of youths in some neighborhoods have attended a dogfight. (*Cleveland, 2006*).
- 43% of school shooters have histories of animal cruelty. (*Arluke & Madfis, 2013*)
- 24% of children in homes marked by intimate partner violence reported that someone in the home had either threatened to, and/or saw or heard someone, kill or harm an animal. Nearly 78% of children who experienced threats or harm took action to protect their pets. (*McDonald, Collins et al., 2015*)
- Between 62% and 76% of animal cruelty in the home occurs in the presence of a child. (*Faver & Strand, 2003*)
- Children who have been sexually abused are five times more likely to abuse an animal. (*Ascione et al., 2003*)
- Children are the victims in 70% of fatal dog attacks. In 21.1% of fatal dog attacks the dog was a abused or neglected. (*Patronek, 2013*)
- Animal abuse was present in 60% of households being investigated for child abuse, and in 88% of homes investigated for physical child abuse. One-third of the animal abuse incidents were

perpetrated by children. The rate of dog bites in these homes was 11 times greater than in non-abusive homes. (DeViney, Dickert & Lockwood, 1983)

- Individuals with the highest rates of both victimization and perpetration of physical bullying exhibited the highest rates of involvement in multiple acts of animal abuse. (Henry & Sanders, 2007)
- Violent adult offenders are significantly more likely than non-offenders to have committed acts of cruelty toward animals as children. (Merz-Perez et al., 2001)
- 35% of boys who were sexually abused had also abused animals. (Friedrich et al., 1986)
- Family variables including marital violence, paternal pet abuse, paternal drinking, and harsh parenting increase the likelihood of childhood firesetting and animal cruelty and are related to adolescent delinquency. (Becker et al., 2004)
- Children with histories of animal cruelty were significantly more likely to have perpetrated bullying, experienced sexual abuse, and have histories of problems with peers or sexually acting out. (Boat et al., 2011)
- A child's cruelty to animals may be an important symptom of negative experiences and/or predictor of future aggressive behavior and should be included in assessments of vulnerable children. (Bell, 2001)
- One of the worst things that can happen to a child is to kill or torture an animal and get away with it. (Mead, 1964)

Is It Child Abuse to Force a Child to Abandon a Pet?



HOLIDAY CHILD ABUSE TO DUMP A DOG!

A boy came in with this dog and started off by telling us it was a stray named Peanut, but you could clearly see the boy was uncomfortable with this version. They were going on holiday and the dog was a problem for them! The mother was not prepared to give a donation, but the boy donated R20 for the upkeep till a new home is found.

A 13 year old boy was forced by his mother to bring their dog in to Bloemfontein SPCA and say it is a stray!

This mother must not cry when her child becomes a habitual liar as it will be HER FAULT!!

Here's an unusual twist on the animal abuse/child maltreatment Link: The Bloemfontein SPCA in South Africa recently reported a situation in which a mother and her 13-year-old son brought in a dog that the boy claimed was a stray named "Peanut". The agents at the reception desk noted the boy seemed quite uncomfortable with the story. Because the dog was supposedly a stray, there was no formal charge for accepting the animal and the mother even refused to offer a donation. However, the boy donated 20 rand (about \$1.32 US) for the dog's upkeep until a new home was found.

Further inquiries revealed that Peanut was, in fact, their own pet and that the family was going away on holiday and the dog was a problem for them.

"This mother must not cry when her child becomes a habitual liar, as it will be her fault," advises the SPCA.

Permission to Reprint

The news items and training opportunities contained in *The LINK-Letter* are intended to disseminate as widely and as freely as possible information about the connections between animal abuse and interpersonal violence. Permission is hereby granted to re-post these articles in other newsletters, websites, magazines, and electronic publications provided that appropriate credit is given to the National Link Coalition and with links to www.nationallinkcoalition.org.

THE LINK AND... CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Link World Awaiting Animal Cruelty Inclusion in FBI Data

The Link community is eagerly awaiting word about the planned rollout of the FBI's revised system of Uniform Crime Reports, utilized by 18,000 law enforcement agencies nationwide, which in 2016 are expected to include, for the first time, animal cruelty incidents. Meanwhile, advance excitement about the new process is resulting in considerable mainstream and professional publicity.



As 2015 drew to a close, numerous media outlets carried articles about the change. Online news journals, including [Yahoo! News](#), the [Washington Post](#) and [pet360.com](#), and local media including stations in Dayton, Ohio, Kansas City, Mo., and South Bend, Ind., interviewed representatives from the National Link Coalition and Animal Welfare Institute about the implications of the change. News media as far away as [The Netherlands](#) picked up the interviews. Under the new process – which has been undergoing extensive beta-testing in several states – participating law enforcement agencies will log reports of simple or gross neglect (i.e., animal hoarding); intentional abuse and torture; organized animal abuse (i.e., dog- and cock-fighting); and animal sexual abuse. The data from local agencies will be sent to state coordinators, who in turn will forward them to the federal level where analysts will be able to determine trends that can be used to develop more data-driven responses.

Link authorities note that it may take several years before enough meaningful data are collected to be useful. Relatively few animal cruelty, abuse or neglect incidents are investigated compared to more traditional police cases, and police and sheriffs will have to be trained to incorporate these cases in their reports as they have historically done with such human-victim crimes as assault, burglary, robbery and homicide. In addition, interface procedures must be developed for jurisdictions where agencies other than law enforcement investigate animal cruelty, such as SPCAs, humane societies, or animal control agencies not working under a police or sheriff's department.

Data submitted to the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting process work their way into four annual publications: *Crime in the United States*; *National Incident-Based Reporting System*; *Law Enforcement officers Killed and Assaulted*; and *Hate Crime Statistics*. Incidents are reported by city, county, university, state, tribal, and federal law enforcement agencies participating voluntarily in the program. The inclusion of animal cruelty incidents – which will send a powerful message to law enforcement agencies and the public that crimes against animals are linked adversely to crimes against people – is part of a much broader redesign and redevelopment of the system that has been in place for more than 30 years.



Pet360.com is a comprehensive informational website for “pet parents”, offering advice and shopping opportunities.



Link Conference Leads to Sheriff's Office Training

Last December 1, the Pegasus Foundation invited National Link Coalition Coordinator Phil Arkow to lead a Link symposium in Port St. Lucie, Fla. One of the 50 participants was Adam Dobrin, Ph.D., a Professor in the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Florida Atlantic University. Dobrin is also a reserve deputy with the St. Lucie County Sheriff's Office and was asked to represent the department at the meeting.

"The information presented at this workshop was shocking," Dobrin wrote in an op-ed published in the [Stuart News](#). "I've spent some time digging through multiple sources of additional data and, sadly, the evidence is overwhelming and convincing. Where there is animal abuse, there is likely to be human abuse and vice versa."

St. Lucie County Sheriff Ken J. Mascara had previously discussed his personal concerns with The Link with Dobrin for some time. As a result of the additional information reported at the "Violence Connection" workshop, Mascara has tasked Dobrin with developing a training program for all deputies and detectives within the sheriff's office "so that every member is aware of this too-frequent and destructive relationship," Dobrin wrote.



Adam Dobrin, Ph.D.

"I can't promise the rates of animal abuse, domestic violence, child maltreatment and elder abuse will go down," he added, "but knowing there is a relationship between these types of violence is a step in the right direction."



Sheriff's Office Spotlights for Link Programming

The Albany County, N.Y. Sheriff's Office was the subject of an extensive profile in the December issue of the [National Law Enforcement Center on Animal Abuse's](#) newsletter, highlighting its extensive focus on taking animal cruelty and welfare – and their link to human violence – seriously.

Among the many animal-friendly programs initiated by Sheriff Craig Apple are:

- the nation's first registry of offenders convicted of animal cruelty, animal fighting or sexual abuse of an animal;
- participation in the Albany County District Attorney's Animal Cruelty Taskforce;
- establishing the County Animal Response Team to protect livestock, domesticated animals, public health and the environment in the event of large-scale natural, manmade or technological emergencies;
- the Steps to Adoption Readiness (STAR) program pairing county jail inmates with shelter dogs for five weeks of training to make the animals adoptable; and
- training for deputies to humanely euthanize deer and livestock victims of automobile accidents.

“Perhaps the Sheriff’s office’s greatest strength in protecting animals within its community is that it is lead by a self-proclaimed animal lover who is an outspoken advocate for animal welfare and who understands the link between animal cruelty and human violence,” said the newsletter.



Sheriff
Craig D. Apple Sr.

Apple has noted that domestic violence and animal cruelty are two of the most under-reported crimes, and are closely linked. “It is a proven link that individuals that are hurting your animals, hurting your pets, beheading your pets, it’s only going to lead to worse things, physical things, with your family,” Apple told a domestic violence conference last September.

BUILDING AWARENESS ABOUT THE LINK



Brazilian Link Coalition is Getting the Word Out

Following several National Link Coalition training programs in São Paulo and Bento Gonçalves over the past few years, a new Link coalition has emerged in Brazil to educate public and professional audiences about animal abuse’s role as a potential indicator and predictor of interpersonal violence.

[Lar em Paz](#) (“Home in Peace”) is an interdisciplinary network of public, private and NGO representatives, researchers and students seeking

“**O Elo**” – **The Link in Portuguese** to connect institutions and individuals who work with domestic violence, elder abuse, child maltreatment, animal cruelty, and public health. The goal is to integrate these sectors to facilitate the exchange of information and the preparation of joint strategies for prevention, education and expertise.



One of the group’s first projects was to produce and disseminate a customizable 27-slide Portuguese-language PowerPoint. Rita de Cassia Maria Garcia, who co-produced the presentation, tells *The LINK-Letter* that recipients have been encouraged to share it widely and pass the word on.

The program, *O Elo -- Link Violencia Humana-Abuso Animal: Uma Realidade Mundial* (“The Link between Human and Animal Abuse: A Global Reality”) notes that domestic violence has been recognized as a global public health and economic concern by the World Health Organization. It explains general Link concepts, and illustrates them with English-language posters and campaigns from the U.S.



**“When animals are abused, people are at risk;
When people are abused, animals are at risk.”**

The PowerPoint features statistics from Brazil: types of domestic violence, types of aggressors, co-occurrence of child abuse with domestic violence, and pet ownership rates. The program notes that Brazil has established a national priority to reduce mortality and morbidity from accidents and violence. It encourages audiences that it is time to finally include pets as members of these families, particularly since Brazil has the highest rate of small dogs per 1,000 people (101) in the world. (The rate in the U.S. is 71.)

The presentation is posted on the National Link Coalition’s website in our section on [foreign-language resources](#).

THE LINK AND... VETERINARY MEDICINE

Veterinarians Need More Training to Identify Abuse

With the anticipated advent in 2016 of the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports adding simple and gross neglect, intentional abuse and torture, organized animal fighting, and sexual abuse of animals to its list of delineated crimes, there will be more expectations within the veterinary profession to identify situations of animal cruelty. Only 75% of veterinary colleges are said to include training in recognizing animal abuse in the curriculum, and with only a mean of 76 minutes of such training. Without adequate training, including animal abuse within a differential diagnosis may not be top-of-mind for practitioners for whom it is easier to conceptualize an injury caused by a dog being hit by a car.

Woolf notes that many veterinarians may not be aware that it is not necessary for them to determine whether a situation consistent with non-accidental injury or abuse is a crime: that determination will be made by law enforcement personnel and prosecutors. "Veterinarians should surrender the idea that they must know that abuse has occurred before reporting it," she writes. "Instead, they should report their suspicions and allow the legal system to decide whether those suspicions warrant a charge of criminal abuse." Woolf argues that all veterinary colleges should include training on animal abuse in the curriculum and that veterinary medical associations, state veterinary medical boards and professional liability insurance companies should support continuing education programs related to animal abuse.

--Woolf, J.A. (2015). *How can veterinarians be reporters of animal abuse when they are not taught to recognize it?* *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*, 247(12), 1363-1364

Veterinary College Students Surveyed on Domestic Violence Shelter Partnerships

Animal abuse and domestic violence are linked issues, and pet ownership is reported to play a crucial role in the choice to leave an abusive situation. Although veterinarians witness the effects of abuse and violence over the course of their careers, they have limited training regarding these issues.

This report examines one mechanism for educating veterinary students while providing a service for victims of domestic violence: the creation of partnerships between domestic violence shelters and veterinary schools. A survey of 33 North American veterinary colleges reported that these extracurricular programs provide both care for pets belonging to victims of domestic violence and an educational platform for student participants. Nine of the schools surveyed described a domestic violence shelter program. Students at these schools were significantly more likely to say that their awareness of the link between animal abuse and domestic violence had increased during veterinary school. Most students reported that they felt poorly prepared to handle domestic violence and animal abuse issues in the workplace. This study indicates that extracurricular programs of this sort are a viable means of educating veterinary students regarding domestic violence and animal abuse. Citing analogous introduction of domestic violence issues into the training curricula for physicians, the authors identify a need for improved education on these topics in veterinary schools across North America.

--Creevy, K.E., Shaver, S.L., & Cornell, K.K. (2013). *Domestic violence shelter partnerships and veterinary student attitudes at North American Veterinary Schools and Colleges.* *Journal of Veterinary Medical Education*, 40(2), 184-191.

NEWS from LOCAL LINK COALITIONS

South Florida Link Coalition Moving Full Steam Ahead

Our newly-formed South Florida Link Coalition (See LINK-Letter December 2015), based on the “Treasure Coast” in West Palm Beach, is making great initial progress. Coordinator [Amber Ahern](#) tells The LINK-Letter that trainings are already planned for the Coalition of Independent Living Options, the Human Trafficking Coalition of the Palm Beaches, and the Delray Beach Kiwanis Club. The group will hold its first meeting on Jan. 28.

Spain’s GEVHA Link Coalition Has an Active Season

Our Spanish Link affiliate, [GEVHA](#) (Grupo para el Estudio de la Violencia hacia Humanos y Animales) had an extremely active October and November. GEVHA founder Dr. Núria Querol reports that she and other GEVHA members participated and presented at five different conferences and that she is busily giving presentations about a book.

Querol spoke about The Link at the 1st National Animal Welfare Conference organized by [PAES](#) (Protección Animales España). This historic conference brought three associations together with a goal of building closer cooperation over animal welfare issues. The II Seminar on Criminology, organized by the Spanish Society of Criminology (Sociedad Española de Criminología), included The Link in a special panel on Green Criminology where the linkages of crimes against nature and animals were explained.

The [International Congress of Profiling & Criminal Analysis in Violent Crimes](#) gathered important speakers in criminology including a former FBI agent. Querol gave a plenary conference on animal CSI and risk assessment in animal crimes. The Police School of Catalonia organized a second training on The Link for police candidates. David Carrasco, Police Officer from Mossos d’Esquadra, spoke about SAF-T (Sheltering Animals and Families Together) and its Spanish chapter, the Freedom Paws Link Project. Querol spoke about indicators of intimate partner violence and risk assessment, giving special emphasis to animal abuse.

The [Conference on Bullfighting in the XXIst Century](#), organized by Plataforma La Tortura no Es Cultura, invited Querol to speak about the effects of exposure to violence in society and the UN’s recommendations to keep children away from bullfighting.

Querol also tells The LINK-Letter that she is collaborating on the presentation of a book “Beatriz y la Loba” (Beatriz and the Wolf) by Concha López Llamas. This is an ecofeminist novel that connects family violence to animal abuse and the cruel treatment that wolves suffer worldwide. The presentations are being done all over Spain and have the support of rangers, wolf and domestic violence experts.



Three of the many GEVHA presentations in October and November included (from left) the Spanish Society on Criminology, the Police School of Catalonia, and the Conference on Bullfighting in the 21st Century.

Spain's SECVI Posts Link Video in New Project

Our second Link coalition in Spain – Sociedad Española Contra Violencia (SECVI) – has embarked on a new Prevent Link Project as a multidisciplinary approach to educate the public and prevent violence against humans and animals. Taking criminological and victimological perspectives, SECVI has recently posted a [YouTube video](#) describing The Link in a Spanish context and its impact on vulnerable people and animals.



SECVI founder Marillanos Reolid Rodenas tells The LINK-Letter that the Prevent Link Project is being developed in conjunction with other human and animal protection agencies in Albacete, Badajoz, Castilla-Léon, Sevilla, Canarias, Barcelona, Menorca, and Cantabria, and hopes to expand to Madrid and other Spanish communities.

European Link Coalition Formed

A trans-national effort to introduce The Link across the European continent is being organized. Coordinator Malcolm Plant tells The LINK-Letter that he has made contact with Link proponents in several European nations and a series of conference calls have been held to strategize next steps. The [European Link Coalition](#)'s initial project has been to create a brochure explaining the predictive nature of animal abuse as a bellwether for interpersonal violence and asking why Europe is 20 years behind the U.S. in this preventative approach to family and community aggression.



“Animal abuse comes from the same etiological pathways as child abuse, domestic violence and elder abuse. They are highly likely to co-occur, except... one of them is easier to identify,” reads the brochure.

The coalition is particularly interested in encouraging veterinarians to be mandated reporters of animal abuse, which would afford practitioners “an equality of status with medical professionals whose rights afford them the ability to identify ‘at risk’ individuals from the human domain. The coalition also seeks the creation of dedicated teams of professionals to respond to reports of animal abuse, so that such investigations would gain the professional support of such human services agencies as social workers, police, and children’s societies.

The brochure is being sent to members of the European Parliament with interests and responsibilities in the child, spousal and animal abuse arenas.

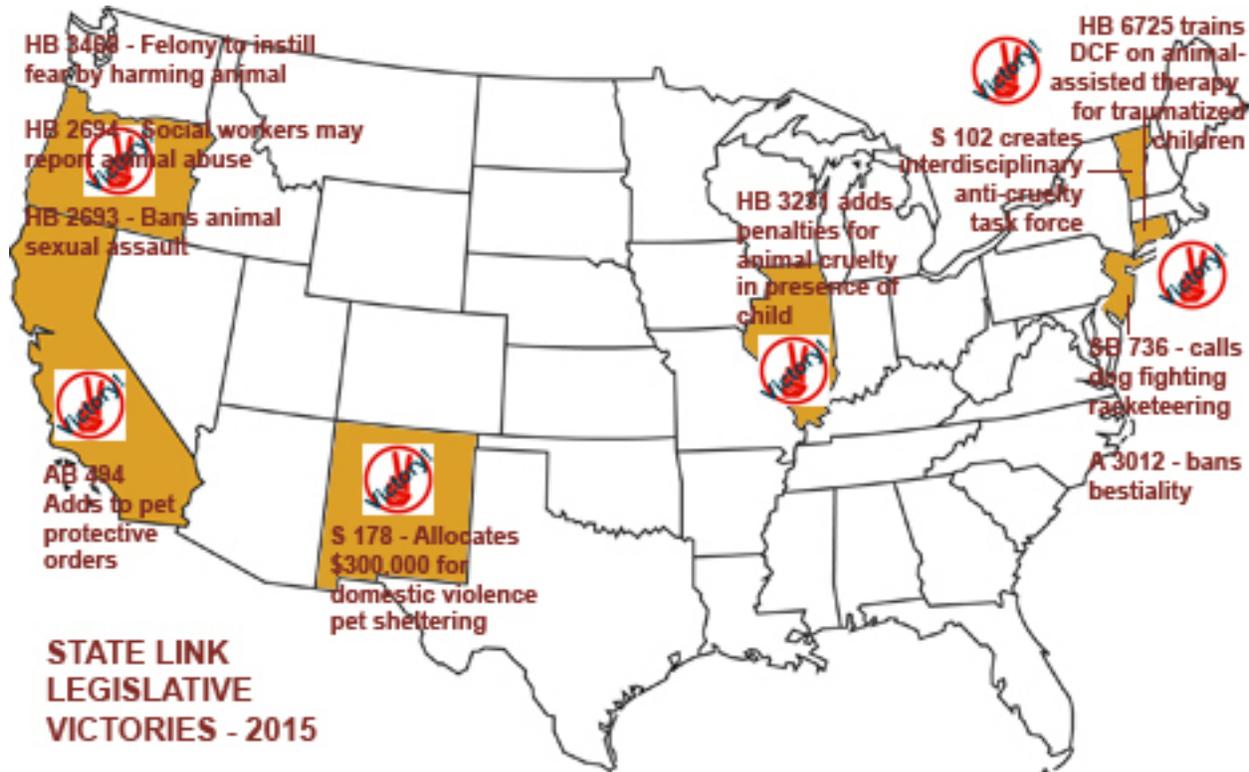
“One identified challenge is the distinct element of parochiality with groups and organizations either focusing strongly on the welfare of the child or spousal abuse or only animal abuse,” noted Plant. “Inviting boundaries to be crossed is quite a challenge.”

The coalition plans to issue a periodic newsletter and envisions the creation of “Animal Police” groups with trained professional awareness of The Link and centered coordination of a Link coalition. The coalition hopes to encourage members of the European Union to enact policies so that in cases of identified domestic violence equal consideration is given to the abused victim’s companion animals.

THE LINK... IN THE LEGISLATURES

Bills We're Watching... and Laws We're Celebrating:

Among the dozens of Link-related bills introduced in 2015, 10 were enacted into law. Our heartfelt appreciation goes out to the legislators in California, Connecticut, Illinois, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oregon, and Vermont who recognize how animal abuse also hurts humans.



Some of 2015's bills have been held over to the 2016 legislative session, while new ones wait to be introduced:

Domestic Violence/Pet Protection Orders



H.R. 1258 – the Pet And Women Safety (PAWS) Act – was re-introduced with a new number and 172 bi-partisan co-sponsors. The bill would expand existing federal domestic violence protections to include pets of domestic violence victims. It would prohibit crossing state lines to harm a domestic partner's pet, and establish a federal grant program to provide assistance and housing to victims' pets in need of emergency shelter. The bill has been assigned to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security and Investigations. A companion measure in the Senate – **S. 1559** – with 23 co-sponsors has been referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry.



Alaska HB 147 would allow victims to petition the court for a protective order that the abuser may not remove, harm or dispose of any animals in the household, and to grant her exclusive care and custody of them. Peace officers investigating domestic violence cases must inform victims of this provision. The bill would also declare pets to be marital property and give

courts authority to decide individual or joint custody when people divorce, with consideration of what would be best for the animal. The bill was held over in the House Judiciary Committee when the Legislature adjourned and will be revisited in January 2016.



Indiana SB 343 would allow a court to grant an order of protection to: (1) grant possession and care of an animal to a petitioner; (2) prohibit a respondent from taking action against the animal; and (3) direct a law enforcement officer to accompany the petitioner to retrieve the animal. The bill has been referred to the Judiciary Committee.



Michigan SB 28 would make it a crime to knowingly kill, torture, mutilate, maim, disfigure, or poison an animal, or threaten to do so, with the intent of causing mental suffering or distress to a person or to exert control over a person. The bill passed the Judiciary Committee and is in the Committee of the Whole.



Michigan HB 4478 would allow courts to issue protection-from-abuse orders preventing respondents from injuring, torturing, neglecting, threatening, or removing the petitioner's animals. It would apply to current or former spouses; individuals with whom the petitioner has a child in common or where there has been a dating relationship; or an individual presently or formerly residing in the same household. The bill passed the full House on Oct. 15 by a vote of 96-9 and a Senate Judiciary hearing was scheduled for Dec. 8.



New Jersey A 494 would provide specific statutory authority to allow courts to include animals in domestic violence restraining orders. The bill affects animals belonging to either party or a minor child in the household. The bill is in the Assembly Women & Children Committee.



Pennsylvania SB 594 would increase penalties for killing, torturing, maiming or poisoning an animal belonging to someone who is protected by a protection-from-abuse order to a \$2,000 - \$15,000 fine and/or two years' imprisonment. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.



Wisconsin companion bills **AB 141** and **SB 97** would add household pets under the provisions of temporary restraining orders or longer-lasting injunctions that can be issued by courts to protect victims of abuse, harassment or threats. The bills would also allow the petitioner or a designee to retrieve household pets. **SB 97** passed the Senate on May 6. **AB 141** was unanimously approved by the Judiciary Committee on Aug. 20 and was sent to the Rules Committee on Sept. 10. The bills will be acted upon in 2016.

Animal Abuse in the Presence of a Child



Massachusetts H3446 would criminalize animal abuse in the presence of a child under age 14 and would increase penalties for such cruelty to up to 10 years in prison and/or a \$10,000 fine. The bill is in the Judiciary Committee.



New York A534 defines "aggravated" animal cruelty as causing extreme physical pain or done in an especially depraved or sadistic manner, a Class E felony. It would make the commission of aggravated cruelty in the presence of a child a Class D felony. The bill is in the Codes Committee.

 **New York A944** and **S1795** would criminalize knowingly causing a minor to attend a place where exhibition of animal fighting is being conducted. **A944** is in the Codes Committee. **S1795** passed the Senate and was referred to the Assembly Agriculture Committee.

Therapeutic Interventions for Child Abuse Victims

 **New Jersey A2155** would establish a three-year pilot program within DCF to provide animal-assisted therapy to victims of childhood violence, trauma, or children with behavioral healthcare needs. The bill is in the Assembly Women & Children Committee.

“CASA for Animals”

 **Massachusetts SB 851** would authorize actions to recover non-economic damages for the injury or death of companion animals and authorize a guardian ad litem to recover damages. The bill is in the Joint Committee on the Judiciary.

 **New York AB 3443** would authorize a guardian ad litem to be appointed by a court in tort causes of action for wrongful injury or death of a companion animal. It would also allow restraining orders and other injunctive relief for the wrongful injury or killing of a companion animal. The bill is in the Codes Committee.

Interventions for Animal Abuse Offenders

 **New York A1445** and **S1174** would increase penalties for animal fighting and aggravated cruelty to animals and would require a psychiatric evaluation for defendants convicted of aggravated cruelty. The bills are in the Agriculture Committee.

 **New York A1673** and **S814** would require unsealing of court records that juvenile offenders convicted of animal cruelty offenses and require them to undergo psychiatric evaluation and treatment where necessary. The bills are in the Agriculture Committee.

Animal Abuse and Other Crimes

 **Michigan HB 4353** would allow animal shelters to consider an individual’s criminal history when determining whether or not to allow that individual to adopt an animal. Convicted animal abusers could not adopt for at least 5 years following conviction. The bill is in the Judiciary Committee. **Senate Bill 219** would prohibit offenders convicted of animal fighting or bestiality from owning animals other than livestock for 5 years. The bill was referred to the Committee of the Whole.

 **New York A346** would create a statewide task force to study how to improve investigations of animal abuse and enforcement of anti-cruelty laws. The bill is in the Agriculture Committee.

 **New York A1596** and **S2936** would expand the definition of aggravated cruelty to animals to include harm to animals during the commission of a felony. **A1596** is in the Agriculture Committee. **S2936** passed the Senate on May 12 and is in the Assembly Agriculture Committee.



The **Oregon** Veterinary Medical Examination Board has proposed Rule No. [875-030-1101](#) which would provide for a screening of applicants and licensees to determine if they have a history of criminal behavior that would preclude their fitness to practice as a veterinarian or certified veterinary technician.

Cross Reporting



Kansas – we are anticipating a bill may be introduced this session that would make animal control officers mandated reporters of child and elder/disabled abuse.



Massachusetts S863 and **H132** would add domestic violence workers, animal control officers and humane officers to the list of mandated reporters of child abuse. **H132** was referred to the Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities and **S863** is in the Judiciary Committee



New York A5082 would require anyone mandated to report suspected child abuse who also encounters suspected animal abuse in the course of their duties to make an immediate report to local police or SPCA agencies. Failure to report would be a Class A misdemeanor and civilly liable. An extensive list of medical, social work, therapy, education, camp, day care, counseling and law enforcement professionals are mandated reporters of child abuse. The bill is in the Social Services Committee.



Pennsylvania HB 760 would protect veterinarians, certified veterinary technicians and assistants from civil liability if they report suspected cases of animal abuse in good faith to law enforcement authorities. The bill passed the House on Sept. 29 and is currently in the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Animal Hoarding



New York A1265 would create the crime of companion animal hoarding. The bill is in the Assembly Agriculture Committee.

Animal Sexual Abuse



Ohio SB 195 would prohibit a person from engaging in sexual conduct with an animal, and related acts. It would provide for the seizure of the animals involved and authorize the sentencing court to require offenders to undergo psychological evaluation or counseling. The bill is in the Criminal Justice Committee.



New Hampshire HB 1547 was pre-filed for consideration in 2016 as Legislative Service Request **LSR 2016-2556**. The measure would establish the crime of bestiality as a Class B felony. Convicted offenders would be required to submit to psychological assessment and counseling at their own expense, and could be barred from residing with any animals for a time period deemed appropriate by the court.

Congratulations to Mark Kumpf!

Mark Kumpf, Director of the Montgomery County Animal Resource Center in Dayton, Ohio, and a member of the National Link Coalition's steering committee, was honored in November with a Pursuit of Justice Award presented by the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys and the Animal Legal Defense Fund.

The award citation commended Kumpf "in recognition of your outstanding leadership in the fight for justice and due process for all victims of crime, animals and humans alike, often in the face of opposition and derision, and for your unyielding dedication to improve the criminal justice system in your local community, state and union. Your efforts are an inspiration to us all and have made this nation safer for all living beings."

Kumpf is past president of the National Animal Care & Control Association and a Certified Animal Welfare Administrator.

Other award recipients were: Madeline Bernstein of the spcaLA; Jody Jones of Animal Services in Dallas, Texas; and Sherry Ramsey of the Humane Society of the U.S.



Award recipients posed for photos following the presentations at the 5th National APA/ALDF Animal Cruelty Prosecution Conference in Pittsburgh.

THE LINK... IN THE NEWS

16-Year-Old Charged in Colorado School Shooting Plot Had History of Pet Abuse

One of the two 16-year-old girls suspected in a plot to shoot students and staff at Mountain Vista High School in Highlands Ranch, Colo. – not far from the 1999 massacre at Columbine High School – had a history of harming pets, according to Douglas County prosecutors. Sienna Johnson was charged as an adult and was being held on \$1 million bond on two counts of conspiracy to commit murder because the court considered her too dangerous to go home. Prosecutors said she had compiled detailed maps of the school showing schedules for the students and the school's police officer, showed no remorse, had violent drawings on her Tumblr page, was practicing with a BB gun and was trying to purchase actual weapons. The map referenced "NBK" – *Natural Born Killers*, the 1994 Oliver Stone movie that was an obsession of the Columbine killers. The two girls were taken into custody on Dec. 12 after Douglas County Sheriff's investigators, acting on a tip, uncovered the alleged plot, Denver's KUSA-TV [9News](#) reported.



Douglas County D.A. George Brauchler

Man Charged with Weapons Violations in Alleged Plot to Kidnap Obamas' Dogs

A man arrested by Secret Service agents in Washington, D.C. on Jan. 6 had a cache of weapons in his car and reportedly told authorities that he planned to kidnap one of the Obamas' dogs. According to a filing in District of Columbia Superior Court, the Secret Service's Minnesota field office learned that Scott D. Stockert, 49, of Dickinson, N. Dak., planned to kidnap "Bo" or "Sunny," the Obama family's pet Portuguese water dogs. Stockert allegedly drove his pickup truck from North Dakota to New York and then to Washington, where he was apprehended in a motel, the [Washington Post](#) reported.



"Bo" and "Sunny"

Agents found an unregistered 12-gauge shotgun and a bolt-action .22-caliber rifle under the back seat, plus more than 350 rounds of ammunition, a billy club and a 12-inch machete. He was charged with illegal weapons offenses and was released into a high-intensity supervision program pending further court action. In addition to his claims about kidnapping the dogs, Stockert reportedly also claimed to be the son of John F. Kennedy and Marilyn Monroe and that he planned to run for president.

Man Charged with Arson, Animal Cruelty in Blaze That Killed Four Dogs



Joshua Keith Harvin

Colorado Springs, Colo. police on Jan. 8 announced the arrest of a man who allegedly set a fire earlier that week that left four dogs dead. Joshua Keith Harvin, 21, was charged with first-degree arson, criminal mischief, and four counts of animal cruelty in the house fire, [The Denver Post](#) reported. A fifth dog was rescued by firefighters and two people were displaced by the blaze. Authorities said the a relative of Harvin's lived at the home, where Harvin previously resided. The fire caused an estimated \$87,000 in damage. Harvin was being held in the El Paso County jail in lieu of \$10,000 bond.

LINK TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Jan. 20 – Pittsfield, Mass.: The regular meeting of [HAVEN](#) (Human-Animal Violence Education Network) will be held at the Berkshire Humane Society.

Feb. 3 – Philadelphia, Pa.: [Phil Arkow](#) will present on The Link to students at the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine.

Feb. 3 – Minneapolis, Minn.: Randy Lockwood, Rachel Touroo and Nicole Eller-Medina of ASPCA and Diane Balkin of ALDF will be among the presenters at a day-long track on "Animal Cruelty: Training MN Veterinarians To Assist Law Enforcement" at the [Minnesota Veterinary Medical Association](#) conference.

Feb. 4 – Minneapolis, Minn.: Randy Lockwood, Rachel Touroo and Nicole Eller-Medina of ASPCA and Diane Balkin of ALDF will be among the presenters on "Be Ready When Suspected Animal cruelty Walks In the Door" at the [Minnesota Veterinary Medical Association](#) conference.

Feb. 5 – West Palm Beach, Fla.: Amber Ahern will lead a staff training on The Link for [CILO](#), the Coalition of Independent Living Options.

Feb. 7 – Washington, DC: The Link will be discussed at the [National Coalition on Violence Against Animals](#)' 2016 Annual Meeting.

Feb. 9 – San Bernardino, Calif.: Phil Arkow and San Bernardino County Animal Cruelty Task Force representatives will present at the San Bernardino County [Children's Network](#) training.

Feb. 10 – West Palm Beach, Fla.: Amber Ahern will present a Link program to the [Human Trafficking Coalition of the Palm Beaches](#).

Feb. 21 – Davis, Calif.: Phil Arkow will present a lunchtime plenary session on The Link at the UC-Davis School of Veterinary Medicine's annual [Winter Conference](#).

Feb. 23 – Newark, N.J.: Phil Arkow will train New Jersey Division of Child Protection and Permanency staff on the implications of animal abuse in child welfare through the [Child Welfare Training Partnership](#).

March 5 – Norman, Okla.: Phil Arkow will deliver the keynote address on The Link at the [National Association of Social Workers – Oklahoma](#) Annual State Conference.

March 6 – Oklahoma City, Okla.: Phil Arkow will present on The Link to the Oklahoma Conference of Churches and the Oklahoma Center for Community and Justice on behalf of the [Kirkpatrick Foundation](#).

March 7-11 – Woodward, Lawton, El Reno, Pryor and Ada, Okla.: The Humane Society of the U.S.'s [Oklahoma Law Enforcement Training program](#) will include a unit on how dog- and cock-fighting are related to other felony crimes.

March 9 – Brunswick, GA: Allie Phillips will present on "The Co-Occurrence of Animal Abuse and Family Violence" at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center for the NCIS Advance Family and Sexual Violence Program.

March 11 – Orlando, Fla.: Phil Arkow will discuss how The Link can bring animal control and humane organizations together at the [Florida Animal Control Association](#) conference.

April 6 – (online): Phil Arkow will present a webinar on Interpersonal Violence and Animal Cruelty for the National Organization for Victim Assistance's [Victim Assistance Academy](#).

April 7 – (online): Allie Phillips will present on "The Connection of Animal Abuse to Family Violence" for the [Battered Women's Justice Project](#).

April 7-10 – Birmingham, UK: Scottish actress Naomi Breeze will perform a one-woman mini-play on domestic violence at the press conference at the [British Small Animal Veterinary Association](#)'s Congress.

April 20 – Niceville, FL: Allie Phillips will present on "The Danger of When Animal Abuse Co-Occurs with Family Violence: Strategies and Policies for Keeping Children Safe" at the 2016 Annual Child Abuse Conference.

May 2-3 – Spokane, WA: Barbara Boat will present on “A New Advocacy Tool: Connecting the Links between “Toxic Stress” and “The Toxic Triad” (Animal Cruelty, Child Abuse and Domestic Violence) at the [Children’s Justice Conference](#).

May 6 – Manahawkin, N.J.: Phil Arkow will train New Jersey Division of Child Protection and Permanency staff on the implications of animal abuse in child welfare through the [Child Welfare Training Partnership](#).

May 11-13 – St. Petersburg Beach, Fla.: Several Link programs will be offered at the 9th Annual [Veterinary Forensic Sciences conference](#).

May 14-15 – Prague, Czech Republic: Allie Phillips and Chuck Mitchell of the Florida Courthouse Therapy Dogs Program will give a presentation on “Therapy Animals in the Judicial System: How You Can Help Maltreated Child Witnesses” at the 2016 Animal Assisted Intervention International Conference.

May 16 – New Brunswick, N.J.: Phil Arkow will train New Jersey Division of Child Protection and Permanency staff on the implications of animal abuse in child welfare through the [Child Welfare Training Partnership](#).

July 11-13 – Paris, France: Phil Arkow will participate in a global exchange examining research and practice aspects of animal abuse and domestic violence at the [International Association of Human-Animal Interaction Organizations’](#) Triennial conference.

Nov. 4 -- Phoenix, Md.: Nancy Blaney will present at the Baltimore County State’s Attorney’s Office Animal Abuse Unit [Animal Abuse Leadership Summit](#).

To subscribe to The Link-Letter (*it’s free!*) – Just send an e-mail to Coordinator Phil Arkow (arkowpets@snip.net) and tell us what organization(s) you’re with and where you’re located.



ABOUT THE NATIONAL LINK COALITION



The National Link Coalition is an informal, multi-disciplinary collaborative network of individuals and organizations in human services and animal welfare who address the intersections between animal abuse, domestic violence, child maltreatment and elder abuse through research, public policy, programming and community awareness. We believe that human and animal well-being are inextricably intertwined and that the prevention of family and community violence can best be achieved through partnerships representing multi-species perspectives.

Members of the National Link Coalition Steering Committee

Phil Arkow, Coordinator

Consultant, ASPCA
Chair, Animal Abuse & Family Violence Prevention Project,
The Latham Foundation
Stratford, N.J.

Lesley Ashworth

Founder/President, American Veterinary Charitable Fund
Consultant, Ohio Domestic Violence Network
Former Director, Domestic Violence/Stalking Program,
Columbus City Attorney's Office/Prosecution Division
Blowing Rock, N. Car.

Diane Balkin, J.D.

Contract Attorney, Animal Legal Defense Fund
Past President, Int'l. Veterinary Forensic Sciences Assn.
Denver, Colo.

Barbara W. Boat, Ph.D.

Associate Professor, Univ. of Cincinnati College of Medicine
Exec. Director, Childhood Trust, Cincinnati Children's Hospital
Cincinnati, Ohio

Maya Gupta, Ph.D.

Executive Director,
Animals and Society Institute
Atlanta, Ga.

Jane A. Hunt

Coordinator, Community Health Improvement Plan
Larimer County Department of Health
Ft. Collins, Colo.

Mark Kumpf, CAWA

Past President, National Animal Control Association
Director, Montgomery County Animal Resource Center
Dayton, Ohio

Randall Lockwood, Ph.D.

Senior Vice Pres., Forensic Sciences & Anti-Cruelty Projects,
ASPCA
Falls Church, Va.

Natalie Martinez

Programs Manager
National Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Denver, Colo.

Paul Needham

Chair, Education Committee,
National Adult Protective Services Association
Shawnee, Okla.

Maria Luisa O'Neill

Bilingual Domestic Violence Expert, Trainer and Consultant
Denver, Colo.

Emily Patterson-Kane, Ph.D.

Animal Welfare Scientist, Animal Welfare Division
American Veterinary Medical Association
Schaumburg, Ill.

Eve Pearl

Executive Director, Council on Child Abuse of Southern Ohio
Cincinnati, Ohio

Allie Phillips, J.D.

Director, Sheltering Animals and Families Together (SAF-T)
Lansing, Mich.

Chris Risley-Curtiss, MSSW, Ph.D.

Associate Professor/Animal-Human Interactions Coordinator
Arizona State University School of Social Work
Phoenix, Ariz.

Michele Robinson

Program Manager, Family Violence & Domestic Relations
National Council of Juvenile & Family Court Judges
Reno, Nev.

Hugh Tebault III

President,
The Latham Foundation
Alameda, Calif.

John Thompson

Deputy Executive Director/Chief of Staff
National Sheriffs Association
Director, National Coalition on Violence Against Animals
Alexandria, Va.